



FACT SHEET



APEL: WHERE INNOVATION HAPPENS

Office of Worker & Community Transition

Background and Challenges

After nearly 50 years of plutonium production, the Hanford Site in Richland, Washington shutdown its last operating plutonium production reactor (N-Reactor) in 1987 and engaged in a massive environmental cleanup and restoration project. Consequently, as its mission shifted from defense production to environmental restoration, work force restructuring became necessary. By the end of FY 1998, Hanford experienced a 35 percent reduction in employment and a total of 8,122 jobs were lost. Due to these events, efforts were required to revitalize the community with new businesses that could create jobs and diversify the area's economy.

The Path to Progress

In May 1994, the Tri-City Industrial Development Council (TRIDEC) was designated as Hanford's Community Reuse Organization (CRO). TRIDEC's goal is to help the community become self-sustaining and less dependent on the Department of Energy (DOE) by recruiting new businesses to the area, creating more jobs, and transferring Hanford Site resources to the community for reuse. Through DOE community assistance funds, TRIDEC supported relocation and expansion activities for new companies in the area resulting in 497 new jobs in the Tri-City community. The Applied Process

Engineering Laboratory (APEL), a technology business start-up incubator, is one such successful venture to attract new businesses to the community.



A tenant of the Applied Engineering Laboratory performs a chemical analysis.

Located in modified excess facilities at Hanford's Tri-Cities Science and Technology Park, APEL was financed with community funds and resources matching a grant from the Department of Energy. The 90,000-square-foot facility provides specialized development space for new business start-ups and entrepreneurs. The facility provides specialized development space, high bay space, segregated chemical storage, and permitted hazardous waste storage areas. It is designed to support tenants in the installation of wet labs, clean rooms, and biomedical laboratories.



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Community Success Story

APEL Creates New Jobs

- Six new companies and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) occupy over 50 percent of APEL. Sixteen new high-tech jobs have been created and 175 additional jobs are expected by the year 2001.

APEL Supports New Businesses and Entrepreneurs

- APEL is accessible to any company, agency or individual entrepreneur who wishes to test new technologies and develop new business products.
- Support and collaboration is available from Pacific Northwest National Laboratory researchers, as well as from Washington State University Tri-Cities faculty and graduate students. The university and national laboratory research staff constitute a stable base of tenants who serve as resources to users and provide long-term financial stability.
- Up to 40 hours a year of free professional services are available to each APEL tenant. PNNL scientists, engineers, and professional staff provide business consulting, mentoring and collaboration, or other support.
- A network of business, finance, and marketing experts are also available through the various programs sponsored by the City of Richland, the university, and community business interests.



An employee inspects the
Micro Chemical Separations Laboratory

APEL's facilities serve a vital role in attracting and retaining new businesses to the community, thereby diversifying the economy and providing new job opportunities for displaced Hanford workers. DOE community assistance funds, TRIDEC's efforts, and community support made the transfer of Hanford's excess facilities a successful reality.

Contact Information

For more information on this project or the Office of Worker and Community Transition, please contact:

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